



GARY R. HERBERT
Governor

SPENCER J. COX
Lieutenant Governor

State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

BRIAN C. STEED
Executive Director

Division of Oil, Gas and Mining

JOHN R. BAZA
Division Director

August 1, 2019

Ken Fleck, Manager of Geology and Environmental Affairs
Interwest Mining Company
P.O. Box 310
Huntington, Utah 84528

Subject: Conditional Approval to Remove Aquatic Species Commitment, PacifiCorp, Deer Creek Mine, C/015/0018, Task #5967

Dear Mr. Fleck:

The above-referenced amendment is approved conditioned upon receipt of 2 clean copies prepared for incorporation. Please submit these copies by September 2, 2019. Once we receive these copies, final approval will be granted.

A stamped incorporated copy of the approved plans will also be returned to you at that time, for insertion into your copy of the Mining and Reclamation Plan.

If you have any questions, please call me at (801) 538-5350.

Sincerely,

Steve Christensen
Coal Program Manager

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Executive Director

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Technical Analysis and Findings

Utah Coal Regulatory Program

PID: C0150018
TaskID: 5967
Mine Name: DEER CREEK MINE
Title: REMOVE AQUATIC SPECIES COMMITMENT

Operation Plan

Fish and Wildlife Protection and Enhancement Plan

Analysis:

The amendment meets the State of Utah R645-301-333 requirements for a Fish and Wildlife Protection and Enhancement Plan. Fish and macroinvertebrate baseline surveys were conducted in 2004 and 2005 prior to facility construction. Following construction, surveys were conducted again in 2008 and carried on every 3 years through 2017. In June of 2018 a devastating forest fire burned much of the surrounding area, dramatically altering the conditions of the Rilda Canyon watershed. This fire, combined with the fact that the mine is near completion of final reclamation, make the commitment to continue the aquatic species surveys unnecessary. The final survey, conducted in 2017, indicated that any differences in the macroinvertebrate community that could have potentially indicated a decline in habitat or water quality, since 2004, were not apparent. The report also notes that the lack of noticeable differences in invertebrate diversity and taxa richness across test sites indicate that similar water quality conditions persist throughout the control and test sites. The results indicate stable water quality measurements before, during, and after construction and mining activities in Rilda Canyon. Regarding the fish survey, the report notes that fish counts have varied widely before, during, and after construction and mining activities and that "no trends have been identified that could be associated to the mine portal construction and operation." In short, with active mining activities no longer occurring at the mine site, and based on 15 years of data, the likelihood of a disruption to aquatic species life in Rilda Canyon to be caused by mine activities is extremely small. It is almost certain than any current or future disruption to aquatic life in Rilda Canyon will be due to impacts related to the forest fire, something the mine bears no responsibility for.

tmiller